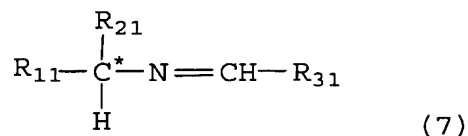


What is claimed is:

1. An imine compound of formula (7):



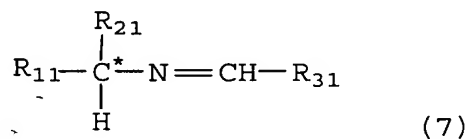
wherein an asymmetric carbon atom denoted by the symbol * is in *S* configuration or *R* configuration,

R_{11} represents an aryl group which may be substituted with at least one group selected from a C1-C4 alkyl group, a C1-C4 alkoxy group, a nitro group and a halogen atom,

R_{21} represents a C1-C4 alkyl group, or an aralkyl group which may be substituted, and

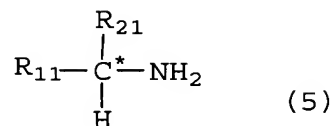
R_{31} represents a 3-benzyloxyphenyl group or a 4-benzyloxyphenyl group.

2. A method for producing an imine compound of formula (7):



wherein the symbol *, R_{11} , R_{21} , and R_{31} respectively have the same meaning as defined in claim 1,

which comprises reacting an optically active amine of formula (5):



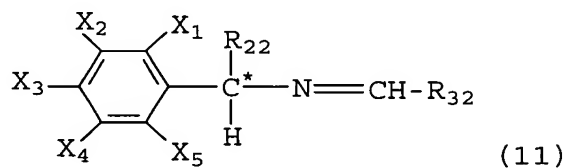
wherein the symbol * denotes an asymmetric carbon atom, and

R_{11} and R_{21} respectively represent the same as defined in connection with the imine compound of formula (7), with a benzyloxybenzaldehyde of formula (6):



wherein R_{31} represents the same as defined in connection with the imine compound of formula (7).

3. An imine compound of formula (11):



wherein X_1 represents a halogen atom, or a lower alkyl group,

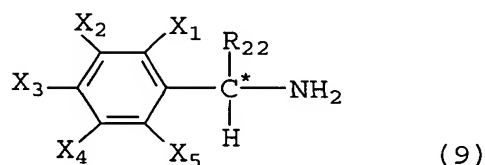
X_2 to X_5 are the same or different and independently represent a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a nitro group or a lower alkyl group,

R_{22} represents a lower alkyl group, and

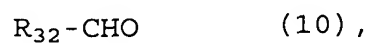
R_{32} represents an aryl group substituted with at least one group selected from a lower alkyl group, a lower alkoxy group, an aryl group and an aryloxy group.

4. A method for producing an imine compound of formula (11) defined in claim 3, which comprises:

reacting an optically active amine compound of formula (9):



wherein X_1 to X_5 and R_{22} are the same as defined in connection with the imine compound of formula (11), with an aldehyde of formula (10):



wherein R_{32} is the same as defined in connection with the imine compound of formula (11).